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RECOVERY, STAGNATION, AND INFLATION

THE EDITORS

THE HEAD FIXERS

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THE ARAB REVOLUTION

HARVEY O'CONNOR

On the Nature of Marxism

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

Early returns from the annual MR Associates fund drive are running ahead of last year in a most gratifying way. We want to thank those of you who have responded to the appeal so promptly, and especially the large number of "old-timers" who come through so generously every year. At the same time, it is unfortunately true that we cannot safely rely solely on this group for MR's financial support: there must be newcomers every year to replace those who through no fault of their own are forced to drop out, and if MR is to grow as we want it to there must be a steady broadening of its base of loyal support. Frankly, we are worried by the relatively small representation of newcomers in the list of those who have contributed so far this year. May we appeal most urgently to new subscribers and those who have not contributed in the past to make the special sacrifice and the special effort needed to join the Associates this year?

(*continued on inside back cover*)

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RECOVERY, STAGNATION, AND INFLATION

It is, of course, much too early to attempt to draw all the lessons of the depression which began in the summer of 1957. After all, despite a substantial upturn during recent months, it is still with us and no one yet knows when it will really be over. But one thing does seem reasonably clear, and it is worth emphasizing even at this stage. The "automatic stabilizers" which were built into the economy during the Roosevelt era have successfully met the most severe test to which they have yet been subjected, and it is they which must receive credit for checking the decline and permitting certain forces of recovery to operate during the late spring and summer.

The chief automatic stabilizers are: (1) Strong trade unions which have prevented a collapse of the wage structure such as used to take place under the impact of mounting unemployment. In this depression, wage rates, far from collapsing as they did after 1929, have actually continued to rise, though more slowly than in the previous boom. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this factor in the maintenance of the level of personal income. (2) Unemployment insurance which has compensated for a considerable part of the income lost by those who have been thrown out of work. (3) Agricultural price supports. In the old days the coincidence of an extra good crop year, such as 1957, with general economic downturn would have had disastrous consequences for farm prices and incomes and indirectly for the rest of the economy. Under the present setup it worked the other way. Larger crops have called forth larger subsidies to farmers. The latest estimates are that the government will pay to farmers during the current fiscal year nearly $2 billion more than was expected last January. The result is that farm income, instead of declining, has risen sharply. This too has, of course, contributed importantly to the maintenance of personal income.

There are other automatic stabilizers such as deposit insurance and a federal tax structure which cuts government receipts more than proportionately to a fall in national income, but in our judgment they have been of relatively less significance in the current situation than the income-maintaining stabilizers. Owing largely to the latter, the familiar vicious spiral of deflation was checked before it got started.

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In the jargon of the economists, the "multiplier," which is the factor by which an initial increase or decline in investment must be multiplied to produce the entire effect on national income, was held to approximately unity—which means that the total decline was roughly equal to the decline in investment, since if you multiply something by one you have just what you started with.

We frankly did not expect the automatic stabilizers to be so effective. The initial decline in private investment was both large and rapid (26 percent between the third quarter of 1957 and the first quarter of 1958), and there was every reason to anticipate that, in the absence of vigorous governmental counter-measures, it would drag personal income and hence consumption down with it. If this had happened the vicious spiral would have gone into operation, and there's no telling where we would be by now. Actually, the automatic stabilizers acted to isolate the decline in investment. The depression, instead of engulfing the whole economy, as it certainly would have done under the institutional arrangements of three decades ago, was effectively confined to the industries producing hard goods.

Given this success of the automatic stabilizers in *promptly* checking the spread of the depression, a relatively early upturn was to be expected. As always happens, the initial decline in investment was heavily concentrated in the inventory sector. In the third quarter of 1957, producers and sellers were adding to their inventories at a rate of $1.3 billion a year; by the first quarter of 1958 they were reducing inventories by $9 billion a year. The resulting decline in the rate of investment was thus $10.3 billion, or more than twice the decline in the rate of investment in producers' durable equipment ($5.1 billion) which was the other hard-hit area. Now, it is a logically inescapable fact that if final demand (that is, the demand of consumers and government) holds up, inventory liquidation is a self-limiting process. You cannot go on indefinitely meeting current demand off the shelf; sooner or later you are going to have to start reordering again, and when the rate of liquidation reaches as high a figure as $9 billion a year it is bound to be pretty soon.

This is the key to what has happened since last spring. Final demand did hold up, thanks to the automatic stabilizers and certain other increases in government spending; and inventory liquidation diminished from the extraordinarily high rate of the first quarter. This does not mean that it has ceased altogether; but it has fallen off rather sharply, and a *decline* in the rate of inventory liquidation means an *increase* in the rate of investment. It is this increase,

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amounting to approximately $5 billion per annum, which is responsible for such modest but still important improvement as the steel, nonferrous metals, and other hard goods industries have experienced in the last half year or so.

Before we turn to the current situation and outlook, a cautionary word may be in order. Just because the automatic stabilizers have been remarkably effective this time does not prove that they will always be. Though there would be no point in digressing to do so now, it is quite possible to imagine a constellation of circumstances in which the downward pressures on consumption would be more severe than they have been during the current depression. In such a situation, the automatic stabilizers might prove insufficient to isolate the initial decline in investment and the vicious spiral of self-propagating deflation might take over. The automatic stabilizers have turned out to be more potent than many (perhaps most) economists would have guessed, but they have no automatic guarantees attached to them. The possibility of a much more severe depression than the current one can by no means be ruled out.

The Outlook Is Still Stagnation

In our last survey of the economic situation (June 1958) we expressed the view that "when the upturn comes it will be weak and incomplete. What lies ahead is not full recovery but stagnation." The mere fact that the upturn has come sooner than we then thought likely in no way affects this conclusion.

Full recovery would require more than a return to the level of gross national product (GNP= total output of final goods and services) which prevailed in the third quarter of 1957. Even then, at the peak of the boom, approximately 4 percent of the labor force was out of work: reasonably full employment would have yielded a GNP of, say, $455 billion instead of $440 billion. In addition, owing to expansion of the labor force and increases in productivity, the level of full-employment GNP increases by something like 4 percent a year, so that instead of the $455 billion of 1957 it would be today closer to $470 billion. But even this understates the requirements for full recovery today. Prices are higher this year than they were last, which means that in real terms $470 billion is less now than it was then. Add $5 billion to take rough account of this factor, and we reach the conclusion that full recovery today would necessitate at least a $475-billion GNP.

What is the actual situation? In the second quarter of 1958,

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which is the latest figure available at the time of writing, GNP was running just under $430 billion, and it is probably now somewhat higher, say $435 billion. What this means is that full recovery today would require an increase in total output (and hence also total demand) of the order of $40 billion per annum. If we allow a year for the attainment of full recovery, the figure would of course be larger by $15 to $20 billion owing once again to expansion of the labor force and increases in productivity. To be on the conservative side, let us say that recovery would be reasonably full if GNP were to increase by $50 billion between now and next year at this time.

It is doubtful if even the wildest optimists expect anything of this sort to happen. We can assume that inventory liquidation will soon come to an end and may well give place to renewed inventory accumulation. At a generous estimate this might give rise to an increase of private investment of, say, $8 billion. The latest SEC-Department of Commerce survey of business plans to spend on plant and equipment indicates that the decline of the last year has come to an end, at least for the time being, but there is no reason to anticipate any substantial rise, what with excess capacity still plaguing most of the basic industries. Housing, which has played a considerable role in the recent recovery, was stimulated last winter and spring by lower interest rates. Now that rates have taken a sharp upward turn, a check to housing seems more likely than continued expansion: clearly, nothing much can be expected from this area. All in all, the prospect of help from private investment seems to be limited to a reversal of the inventory trend—not unimportant, to be sure, but obviously far from sufficient.

As to personal consumption, we shall doubtless be making more than ample allowance for any increase that is likely to take place if we assume that a rate of growth close to the average of the years immediately preceding the depression is resumed. This would add some $12 billion to total demand during the next twelve-month period.

Finally, we can be quite sure that government spending will continue upward, though, barring war, almost certainly at a slower rate than during the past year. In view of the dangers of inflation—whether real or imaginary is a separate question which we shall consider presently—the federal government seems determined to hold down the rate of increase of spending; while state and local governments are likely to find their financial capacity restricted by higher interest rates and generally tight money. Under these conditions, we can hardly assume that total government expenditures for goods and serv-

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ices will rise by more than $5 billion during the year ahead.

Adding up these estimates—$8 billion private investment, $12 billion personal consumption, and $5 billion government—we arrive at a total increase of $25 billion as against the $50 billion required for "reasonably full" recovery. This would be an improvement over the present situation, which we have estimated at $40 billion short of full recovery, but it is still a long way from the goal. On less favorable assumptions, which we would regard as more realistic, the economy would be no nearer to full recovery than it is now and might even be farther away.

But this is not the whole story. The argument so far has been confined to value magnitudes. There is reason to believe that in terms of employment (and unemployment), the outlook is even gloomier. The reason for this is that productivity per man hour, after rising at an abnormally slow rate in 1956 and 1957, seems to have turned sharply upward in recent months. Estimates by *Business Week* (September 20) indicate that for the whole of 1958, productivity should be about 4 percent above 1957 (as against 1.4 and 2.5 percent increases in 1956 and 1957 respectively). But the really impressive figure is that the fourth quarter of this year is up no less than 7 percent over last year, showing that the curve is rising steeply at this point. This is not unexpected. The large investment and modernization programs of 1955-1957 were bound to pay off sooner or later, and a good deal of cost-cutting and rationalization always takes place during a depression. Further, while the level of investment has fallen since last year, it still remains absolutely high—certainly sufficient to provide for a continuing rapid rate of technological improvement. Considering the revolutionary nature of some of the new techniques that are now being introduced (automatic controls, data-processing systems, and so on), it may even be that we are now witnessing a discontinuous upward leap of the labor productivity curve.

What this means for employment, of course, is that the number of jobs is growing less than in proportion to the expansion of output. If productivity is rising at a rate of 7 percent per annum, production will have to go up at the same rate merely to keep the number of employed workers from falling off. And since the size of the labor force is growing, even this would not be enough to keep the number of unemployed from swelling. Actually, if the above arguments are valid, there is no reason to anticipate anything closely approaching an 8 percent rate of increase of demand (a $25 billion increase of GNP during the next year would be less than 6 percent). We con-

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clude that in the humanly all-important field of employment, the best that can be expected is stagnation, the worst a steady deterioration.

The New Inflation

If all this is true, we may well ask why there is so much talk about inflation. There is no universally accepted definition of inflation, but nearly everyone would agree that the essence of the matter is a *general* rise of prices. And economists have traditionally assumed that a general rise of prices can occur only if demand outstrips supply—in other words, if demand keeps on increasing at a time when supply either can no longer be increased at all or can be increased only at sharply rising costs. And this in turn means that inflation has been assumed to be associated with full or nearly full employment of labor and/or productive capacity. At the present time, however, and for the foreseeable future too, there are no shortages of anything. Quite the contrary. Some 7 percent of the labor force is out of work, and probably an even larger proportion is on part time. In all important industries there is an ample margin of idle productive capacity. There is, in fact, little doubt that in most lines production could be greatly expanded at constant or even diminishing costs. In other words, none of the classical conditions of inflation is present.

Nevertheless, one can hardly open a newspaper without reading about the dangers of inflation. At the time of writing, moreover, the stock market is booming, and the government is busily engaged in tightening the screws of monetary policy according to the classical recipe for fighting inflation. What are we to make of all this? Is it crazy, or are we perhaps confronted by a new kind of inflation which can operate even under conditions of unemployment and excess capacity?

The experience of 1956-1957 certainly suggests that the present fear of inflation is not without a real foundation. Those were years of substantial unemployment—more than 4 percent of the labor force—and ample productive capacity, and yet both the wholesale price index and the consumer price index rose steadily throughout the period. On the basis of this experience, it can hardly be denied that what economists used to think about the necessary prerequisites of inflation is in need of modification. On the other hand, since last March there has been no further significant upward movement of prices, a slight increase in the consumer index being offset by an al-

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most identical decline in the wholesale index. From this it would seem to follow that if unemployment rises to some critical level and stays there long enough, the inflationary process comes to an end. Conversely, if unemployment falls below the critical level—which appears to lie between the 4 percent of 1956-1957 and the present 7 percent—we should expect inflation to get under way again.

As regards the current outlook, therefore, the seriousness of the threat of renewed inflation would seem to depend largely on whether the "critical level" of unemployment is closer to 7 percent or 4 percent. If it is not far below 7 percent, then the danger is real, for the current recovery could undoubtedly produce *some* amelioration of the unemployment situation, at least temporarily. On the other hand, if the critical level is nearer to 4 percent, the danger would appear to be rather remote, for there is small prospect of any *major* reduction in the number of jobless in the near future.

That this is a most disturbing conclusion needs no emphasis. Apparently we cannot even approach full employment without starting up the inflationary process, and the price of full monetary stability may be an appallingly high level of unemployment.

Is there any escape from this cruel dilemma? Before we can answer this question we shall have to inquire into the mechanics of what may be called "the new inflation."

How the New Inflation Works

The prime mover of the inflationary process is to be found in the concentrated basic industries which qualitatively, though not in every statistical aspect, dominate the American economy. Being monopolistic or oligopolistic in structure, they are in a position to set their own prices to yield enormous profits; their workers are relatively well organized; and they are technologically progressive, much more so than the distributive and service trades which together employ a majority of the labor force. This combination of factors establishes an extremely powerful engine of inflation at the very core of the United States economy.

The way the process works can best be understood if we start by assuming that wages are given and prices are set to yield maximum profits. With the passage of time technological improvements are introduced which cut costs and raise profits. Some downward readjustment of prices will follow from time to time, since if costs decline and everything else remains the same, the profit-maximizing price also declines. Profits of course steadily rise. Under the assumed con-

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ditions, in other words, the benefits of increasing productivity would go largely into swelling profits and to a secondary, and probably minor, extent into lower prices for the rest of the economy.

This is the tendency of things in the concentrated industries, and it naturally provides the unions in this sector of the economy with both opportunity and justification to press their claims. The big corporations can afford to pay their workers better, and the unions demand that they do so. Unfortunately, however, there is no way labor can "get at" the huge profits that flow into the coffers of the corporate giants. What actually happens is that the corporations make the minimum concessions they think necessary to avoid unduly costly "labor trouble" and then promptly pass on the resulting higher costs to the rest of the economy in the form of higher prices.* This enables the corporations to placate the unions with which they deal without at the same time giving up any of their profits or indeed sacrificing the gains of advancing technology. From their point of view, it is a beautiful illustration of how one really can eat one's cake and have it too.

It must not be supposed that this means that the unions in the concentrated industries are simply the victims of a sort of confidence game. The wages (and other benefits) of their members do go up, and if they are strong enough and fight hard enough they may succeed in acquiring some of the fruits of rising productivity for their members. The point to be stressed here is that these gains, real though they are, normally do not come out of the profits of the big monopolistic corporations but rather are won at the expense of consumers in general who live on relatively fixed incomes or whose wages rise more slowly than those of the basic industrial workers. In effect, and regardless of intent, what happens is that through the medium of rising prices and rising wages employers and employees in the concentrated industries collaborate to improve their own position relative to that of the rest of the economy.

Now it is important to understand that this sets up strong inflationary pressures throughout the whole system. Despite obstacles and lags, persistently rising wages in one important segment of the economy must sooner or later be followed by an upward movement elsewhere. And the ever higher prices of the basic industries push up

* Actually, since the profit-maximizing price is not always easy to find or to establish (for example, because of the threat of antitrust action), the corporations often raise prices by more than the increase in labor costs, thus in effect making use of unions as an adjunct to a coldly calculating monopolistic policy.

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the costs and hence eventually the prices of all other sectors of the economy. Once the process gets under way, moreover, it tends to be self-reinforcing. Faced with rising living costs, all workers have an additional reason of the strongest kind to fight for higher wages, and employers have less and less excuse for refusing. In recent years, the inevitable relation between changes in the cost of living and wage adjustments has been increasingly recognized in collective bargaining agreements by some sort of sliding scale arrangement, a device which tends, as it were, to lubricate the inflationary mechanism.

The Control of Inflation

Discounting such obviously utopian remedies as restoring competition and breaking up the trade unions, there are two and only two ways of checking and controlling this new kind of inflation, which, as we have argued above, is endemic to a highly developed monopoly capitalist economy. The first is through depression and stagnation. The second is by means of direct state controls over prices and wages.

Depression acts primarily through creating unemployment and thus weakening the bargaining power of unions, secondarily through constricting demand and thus discouraging the monopolies from raising prices in order to increase their profits. There can be no doubt about the efficacy of this method of inflation control. The only question, as we have already seen, is how much unemployment is needed. The experience of the past year suggests that 7 percent of the labor force is enough; whether much less will suffice remains to be seen.

The second method of inflation control—direct regulation of prices and wages—has been tried and has worked reasonably well during wartime. It does not follow that it would be equally satisfactory during peacetime. If the method is to be effectively applied, plenary power over the distribution of income is necessarily vested in the state—for he who controls prices and wages at the same time controls the distribution of income. That this would thoroughly corrupt what is left of American democracy seems all too evident. (The corrupting influence of far-reaching controls in a private-enterprise system was observable in many countries even under wartime conditions: it would operate in a much less restrained manner in peacetime.) In the long run, it would probably lead to some sort of corporate state with the big corporations in the saddle, aided and abetted by a trade union bureaucracy of the Labor Front type.

Monopoly capitalism, it seems, offers no way out that a decent

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human being can accept. Whatever some would-be hardboiled liberals may say, permanent inflation as a way of life is both degrading and cruelly unjust to those least able to take care of themselves. Inflation control through heavy unemployment, whether "natural" or enforced, is obviously no better and seems likely to be even less tolerable to the great majority of the electorate. Finally, direct controls, though advocated with increasing frequency in liberal circles, offer no hope of a rational solution and in the long run threaten to bring on evils at least as bad as those they are intended to cure.

The outlook right now is stagnation; and the Eisenhower administration, if we may judge from its adoption of a ferociously tight money policy at a time when 7 percent of the labor force is still out of work, seems determined to prevent any recovery which might again start up the engine of inflation. That, of course, can hardly last more than the two years Ike still has in the White House. After that we can probably expect a return to a spell of inflation under Democratic auspices. And then the turn of the direct controllers may come—for how long it is not even useful to try to speculate.

Nothing good, unfortunately, can come from such wild and futile gyrations of policy—that is to say, nothing good can come unless the American people learn from the bitter experiences in store for them that what is needed is not a new policy but a new economy. A socialized, planned economy in a country as rich and advanced as the United States would have no need of a cure for either inflation or stagnation for the very simple reason that neither problem would ever arise.

(October 17, 1958)

"We do not want it [a machine] to do its business, but ours. We no more want an original machine than an American board of college trustees would hire an original professor.

—Charles Peirce, 19*th century American logician and philosopher*

He who gives money he has not earned is generous with other people's labor.

—Bernard Shaw

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THE ARAB REVOLUTION

BY HARVEY O'CONNOR

The Arab is the latest of the great revolutions of the twentieth century. The Arab people, lost in the backwash of history for centuries, is shaking off fetters, domestic and foreign. The ancient lethargy imposed by sheik and landlord, buttressed in later years by foreign guns and gold, gives way. The Arabs seem again on the verge of an awakening such as carried their banners from Spain to India a thousand years ago and made Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo world centers of culture.

The opening of the Revolution can be conveniently fixed in 1952 when King Farouk fled to his yacht in Alexandria and sailed away for what after all was his favorite refuge, the French Riviera. For the first time in 2,000 years and more, since the Pharaohs, Egyptians ruled Egypt, when the native colonels, backed by the suddenly tumultuous crowds of Cairo, ended the reign of the Turkish Mohammed Ali family and confiscated their palaces and their millions of acres of Delta lands. Syria, in a series of *coups d'état,* climbed toward an uneasy independence and then joined forces with Egypt in 1958, forming the new United Arab Republic. A few months later Iraq threw off its Turkish Nuri Pasha and his British overlords; symbolically the Baghdad populace sacked both the hated Royal Palace and the British Embassy, twin symbols of oppression.

The Revolution is by no means completed. If the Maghreb (the West) is to be included in the Arab Nation, Morocco and Tunisia have advanced toward some measure of independence; Algeria struggles against the restraining force of 400,000 French soldiers. In the desert lands of Libya and Arabia, the Revolution is but half-completed, or less.

So far, the Arab Revolution has followed the classic style of modern revolutions, throwing off bonds of a dying feudalism. Arab scholars read intently the classics of the American, French, and British revolutions to gain an understanding of their own, and to see what road lies ahead. They also read the classics of the Russian and Chi-

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This is the second of a series of articles reporting on a recent trip to the Middle East.

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nese revolutions. Therein lies the difference between the Arab and other revolutions against feudalism; there is a choice on the road ahead, whether toward a kind of capitalism, or a kind of socialism, or some hybrid of the two.

Scholars may be depended upon to furnish the intellectual armor for the victor, but the actual direction of the Revolution, in the next few years ahead, lies in the hands of the colonels and the city populace. The colonels control the naked weapons of power, the machine guns and the tanks; the people of the great cities, turbulent and even fanatic in the knowledge of their own undisciplined power, give frenzied acclaim to their military heroes, or retire into a massive sullen resistance which can bode ill to their rulers. As for the peasants, the millions of unlettered, disease-ridden fellahin of the Fertile Crescent from the Nile to the Tigris-Euphrates, they are a force still barely awakening from thralldom to sheik and landlords. They will yet be heard.

So far the Arab Revolution has been nationalistic, anti-imperialist, and anti-feudal. Nationalism is the dynamic force behind the immediate revolution. A people crushed but proud at last has its own banners, its own rulers, even its own exploiters, rather than foreigners. Ever since Islam advanced in the eighth century out of the Arabian deserts, the peoples who now call themselves Arab have been under more or less unified rule until recent times. The deserts of central Arabia of course have always been free of foreign domination—they are desolate and empty, save for hungry bedouin. Elsewhere, in modern times, the Turk held sway except where the rapacity of the French and British pushed him aside. In Egypt the French and British exercised their sway through the Khedives, the Turkish viceroys. The lands of Syria and Mesopotamia remained directly under the Sultan, unified. It was this unity which was broken up after the first World War, when the British and French carved out the artificial mandates of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordania, and Iraq. The medieval sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf had already been taken over by the British, but they were unimportant until oil was discovered in Bahrein, Kuwait, and Qatar.

In all these lands, people regard themselves as Arabs. They speak dialects of Arabic, profess mostly the Moslem faith, and share the cultural heritage of the Koran and the great sages of Islam. It would be as idle to question their Arabism on the basis of race, as the Jewishness of the various peoples who call themselves Jews. The Arabs are mostly semitic, but there are also the hamitic peoples of

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North Africa; and in Central Africa plenty of good "Arabs" are Negro. Particularly in the Fertile Crescent, they yearn for the re-created Arab Nation, discarding the synthetic sovereignties so recently chopped out by foreigners. On this basis, capitalist and worker, sheik and peasant, king and commoner, unite. The conviction of united nationality is shared by the despotic King of Saudi Arabia and the Communist worker of Damascus, and all give allegiance to the Arab Nation, a-borning. For that reason the old regime in Baghdad (before the recent revolution) and the new regime in Cairo have alike collected millions for the Liberation armies of Algeria; when an Eden stumbles into a Suez Canal venture or a Dulles into Lebanon, the reaction of the Arab people, from the Shatt al-Arab to the Pillars of Hercules, is one of anger and solidarity.

Certainly anti-imperialism is the next most powerful bond. Even the British sheiks of the oil-rich Persian (the Arabs call it the Arabian) Gulf are beginning to respond; the ruler of Kuwait is applying for membership in the Arab League and lending money to Egypt, the sheiklets of the Arabian Rim are lifting their eyes beyond their immediate stretch of desert. With the fall of the pro-British regime in Iraq, the last bastion of empire is gone in the Near East; from now on it will take the most delicate diplomacy to save the oil regions for British Petroleum and Royal Dutch/Shell.

The most sensitive gauge of the strength of anti-imperialism is in the person of his august highness, the King of Saudi Arabia. The monarch of that fanatic Moslem state has felt his own attitude mollified by the $300 million yearly which ARAMCO, the Arabian-American Oil Company, dumps into his personal coffers. Both the late Ibn Saud and his son, the current Saud, from time to time have seemed to orbit around Washington. If so, the satellite is now in eclipse; Saud's brother, who has taken over the helm of state, exclaimed the other day:

> The Americans believe I am their enemy. If they only realized the meaning of my advice to them, they would know that I am talking to them as their best friend. I told Eisenhower and Dulles that it would be better for them to change their methods in dealing with the Arabs and regard them as a free people possessing its own nationalism and way of life. But the Americans refused to act on this advice. They insisted on treating the Arabs as a master treats his serf. The result is what you now see.

The Sheik of Kuwait, after the fall of the puppet King of Iraq,

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hastened to meet with the President of Egypt. This Sheik, who banks $100 million a year in Lombard Street, and was hitherto considered to be a very pillar of imperialism, undoubtedly was less influenced in his eagerness to meet the Egyptian by his love of Nasser than by his fear of his own subjects, whose Arabism in recent years has overflowed into surprising demonstrations in Kuwait. If even the absolute monarchs of the oil states must bend before their people on the issue of imperialism, there can be little doubt that hatred of foreign exploitation is twin to love of Arab unity among the masses.

Whether the Revolution which began along the Nile in 1952 and swept across to the Tigris and Euphrates in 1958 is merely an exercise in nationalistic xenophobia or a genuine social upheaval can be determined by a simple test—how landlords fare. On this the Egyptian Revolution was explicit—among the first laws of the new regime was one limiting landlords to a maximum of 200 acres and expropriating the far-flung royal domain. The 200-acre limit might seem extraordinarily severe by American standards; yet in the Delta where there are three crops a year from inordinately rich soil, the 200 acres might well entitle the owner to dawdle on the pebbly beaches of the Riviera, the more so as he pays his fellahin nothing in cash. Following up, the new regime, with fanfare well worthy of the best Chinese propaganda, announced plans for the new Liberation Province, between the western irrigated lands of the Nile Delta and the measureless desert, which was to bloom as a garden. Alas for the hopes of well-intentioned revolutionists, Liberation Province has yet to receive the barest percentage of the hundreds of thousands of smiling peasants who were to get two to five-acre tracts. Corruption and the lack of administrators and technicians laid heavy hands on the great project. Confronted by such problems, the Revolution falters; perhaps internal decay begins. For after all, it was not the peasants who toppled the regime of Farouk, but the colonels. They knew that Egypt was defeated in the Israeli war of 1948 because the Army was rotten at the top; soldiers went into battle without ammunition for which the government had paid plenty. Why? As the young colonels looked deeper, they found that army corruption but paralleled that of the government. The government itself was a decadent apparatus pillaged by the landlords and the Cairo representatives of foreign interests. Ergo, the King, the landlords, and their allies must go. The fellahin must be freed from the feudalism that sapped the state. It has proved easier to chase out the landlords than to free the fellahin.

For five thousand years the fellahin have survived Pharaohs and

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Ptolemies, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Turks. They constitute the most stable peasantry the world has known; their social system, their tools, their primitive techniques remain almost unaltered across the millenia. Their very stability is an asset to a revolutionary government, and also a stumbling block to rapid land reform. Village (tribal, patriarchical) loyalties may tie the peasant more closely to his own landlord than to the peasants in the next village. Dependence on the landlord must be replaced by dependence on the cooperative, the state farm expert, the government's land policy. Here the peasant's illiteracy and traditions combine with governmental corruption and lack of trained agronomists to slow down effective reform. In the confusion, the old landlord by sly tricks evades the 200-acre limitation; or perhaps an army officer assigned to the district turns up as the new landlord.

This situation underlines a main difficulty of the Arab Revolution. It was initiated by the military. Admittedly among the officers were patriots who had pondered the lessons of capitalist and socialist revolutions, but army training hardly qualifies one as a political scientist, a civil administrator, or even as a politician. The colonels stepped into something of a political vacuum; in truth the old regime had collapsed rather than been overthrown. There was surprisingly little bloodshed either in Cairo or Baghdad during the revolutionary coups. The peasants responded eagerly to the promise of land; but they had not initiated the Revolution. The city workers greeted joyously the prospect of unionism, but neither had they been prime movers in the overturn. The rising business class, anxious to become capitalists, were as surprised on the morning of the Revolution as any other class. The intellectuals, harried by the savage repression of the political police, hailed the Revolution, but it was hardly of their making, either. The state power, in the Arab countries, had always been a naked matter of bayonets, with no camouflage.

Since the Egyptian Revolution, unions and peasant cooperatives have been fostered, the rise of native capitalists encouraged, education and health spurred. A massive public opinion now stands allied to the colonels, but a public opinion under unitary control. All parties are banished in favor of the National Union, a topdown apparatus. President Nasser, rather astonishingly, nominates his own parliament, the elected one having gotten rather out of hand. In the government various tendencies from conservative state capitalism to mild socialism contend behind the scenes.

Such a revolution may seem perplexing to the doctrinaire, but

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then it happened in an economically retarded country and was fired, not by the oppression of native capitalists but by the rapacity of foreign imperialism and native landlords. The Arab Revolution follows the opportunistic pattern of the Asian-African upheaval. The question is: Where does this Arab Revolution go?

The colonels are improvising. They aim to advance the living standards of the masses so that a market may be created for native industry (and capitalists). There being little private capital available for industry and few capitalists of proven ability, the state itself sets up new industries, such as iron and steel, hopeful that when they are functioning, shares may be sold to the public. This is the plan, but actually the industries are so new that it would be unrealistic to demand a profitable balance sheet. There is a good bit of capital around, wrung from the land by the landlords, or from small industry and merchandizing, but this mostly goes into real estate speculation, the curse of all the underdeveloped countries. Political instability makes long-range investment too risky: 100 percent must be earned within a year or so, and real estate is the sure payoff. A rigorous taxation policy could channel this money into the treasury, but no Arab country has the ability or the integrity to enforce an adequate income tax. So for industrial expansion and land reform Egypt depends on customs duties, excise levies, and the income from the Suez Canal.

If this sounds a bit like welfare statism, with the emphasis on the statism, it is at least a leap into the twentieth century, skipping the eighteenth and nineteenth. If the test of the Arab Revolution is the break-up of the hold of foreign corporations and native landlords on the state, then it must be conceded that Egypt has done well. This year the Syrian region of the United Arab Republic has announced a land reform program and the new Iraqi regime has put land reform high on its list. While undoubtedly landlordism remains in Egypt, the feudal system no longer dominates the state; the bigger landlords have retired to the Riviera, and many of the others find themselves in trouble and often in jail.

President Nasser describes the regime as aiming to be "socialist, democratic, and cooperative," but these words are not to be construed too literally in the Western sense. Nevertheless, socialism of a sterner brand than British laborism has a shining attraction to the intellectuals and masses of the Arab world. Communist socialism has a magic; propertyless workers and peasants can readily identify themselves with the masses in Russia and China lifting themselves by their own bootstraps without the help of imperialism or capitalism. In con-

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trast, Western propaganda a la Hollywood is admired, but as a venture into Never-Never Land—comparable perhaps with our admiration for the Thousand and One Nights of Scheherazade, fascinating but out of this world. Because the problems and successes of the Soviet masses strike home in the Arab lands, the rulers have found it necessary to outlaw the Communist Party in all of them (except possibly in Iraq for the time being).

The only non-Communist socialist movement of any consequence in the Arab countries is the Baath Party, whose name translates roughly as the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party. Its intellectual leaders hold forth in Damascus, but the party has strength in Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, and in the Sheikdoms. The Baathists describe themselves as Marxists but differ from the Communists in stressing the rights of the individual. Baath is non-sectarian and its members rejoice that the new UAR constitution, unlike the previous Egyptian document, omits mention of Allah. To the typical anti-imperialist and anti-feudal ingredients of Egyptian nationalism, the Baath adds anti-capitalism, maintaining that the Arab Nation has no need to follow the way of the Western cross when the example of Russia and China is so evident.

The Baath party of Syria dissolved itself into the UAR National Union, which Nasser heads; its members hold important posts in the UAR Syrian region. In the new Iraq regime, also, Baathists are prominent. When the new Jordanian government is formed, as seems likely in the near future, Baathists will probably be more important there than in either Syria or Iraq.

Baath claims to be the intellectual progenitor of the Arab Revolution, the only international organization of the Arab lands, the only force with a coherent program of socialist nationalism. It hopes, through its influence in Syria, to affect the policies of the UAR. In both Syria and Iraq, Baath has support in the army. The internal struggle for power in the Arab lands may from now on revolve around the two poles: the Nasserite army junta with its welfare-state ideology, and the Baath Party with its socialist ideology.

Obviously though, the domestic struggle of ideologies is overshadowed by the incessant pressure of imperialism and the events of the cold war. In this respect the Arab lands are hapless victims of external forces. The invasion of Suez, Lebanon, and Jordan, the presence of the United States Sixth Fleet in the eastern Mediterranean, the British military outposts in Cyprus and Bahrein, induce the Arabs to submerge their differences into a totalitarian National

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Union, to rally behind Nasser as the symbol of resistance, to hold off the development of democratic rule, to refuse any contact with Israel. These are the forces which may yet lead the Arab Revolution into sterile military adventurism and crush its social content. Just such forces throttled the French Revolution.

If the social content of the Arab Revolution is overwhelmed by its militarist feaures, the blame belongs to Eden and Macmillan, to Dulles and Guy Mollet. It is doubtful whether the State Department proconsul of Sullivan and Cromwell, Standard Oil's legal firm, really cares whether the Arab states are feudalist or capitalist or even mildly socialist; Dulles has his eye on the main chance, the investments of his clients.* That his policies hasten the day when his clients will lose all seems immaterial; a certain madness overwhelms those for whom destiny has rung the bell.

The darker side of the Arab Revolution has perhaps been overemphasized in the preceding pages. No one who has been in Cairo, Beirut, or Damascus (and now in Baghdad) can ever forget the joy of young people, the exhilaration of new-found freedom among masses of the most cruelly exploited people the world has known. If the measure of freedom is deficient, its quality shines in the new dignity and hope which the Revolution has brought to the Arabs. That its fulfillment can be delayed by the blind policies of Western diplomacy is a crime against 40,000,000 Arabs for which the perpetrators deserve to drown in a sea of the oil they love so well.

* The oil situation in the Near East will be discussed in a subsequent article.

We have on a grandiose scale provided peoples of the underdeveloped nations with the weapons of destructive warfare, and have been miserly in providing them weapons to wage war on their own poverty, economic ills and internal weaknesses.

—Senator Fulbright, August 6, 1958

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ON THE NATURE OF MARXISM

BY PAUL A. BARAN

In the last issue of *Monthly Review* I discussed some aspects of capitalist development which are at variance with the expectations that could be derived from what is usually considered to be Marxian doctrine. I suggested at the same time that this conflict is only apparent and is due to a serious misconception of the nature of Marxism. It is the purpose of this article to pursue this theme somewhat further and to try to place the present condition of Marxism in what would seem to me a more proper perspective—leaving aside for the time being the most important task of exploring the complex historical process which gave rise to the dominant interpretation of Marxian thought.

I

Contrary to widespread opinion, Marxism is not and never was intended to be a "positive science," an assortment of statements about past and present facts, or a set of predictions about the shape or timing of future events. It was always an intellectual attitude, a way of thought, a philosophical position the fundamental principle of which is continuous, systematic, and comprehensive *confrontation of reality with reason.* Not that this principle originated with Marx and Engels. Socrates' famous dictum "the unexamined life is not worth living" inspired progressive thought from its earliest beginnings and oriented a great philosophical tradition which centered on the critique of reality in the light of reason and whose aim and purpose was to seek out and to establish the prerequisites and the conditions for the growth and development of man. Yet it was left for Marx and Engels to take a decisive step forward in this centuries-old effort at confronting reality with reason. They translated the notions of both reality and reason from the metaphysical abstractions and idealistic assertions—the forms in which they appear in most pre-Marxian thought—into living, concrete, categories of real, continually moving, continually changing, human existence. Thus, while uncompromisingly

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This is the second part of a two-part article entitled "Crisis of Marxism?" The first part appeared last month. The author is professor of economics at Stanford University.

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committed to the principle of confronting reality with reason, while convinced that this confrontation represents the indispensable basis of all humanist thought and the only valid guidepost for meaningful human activity, Marxism by no means implies a dogmatic finding as to what defines reason or what constitutes reality at any given time.

To Marxism the meaning of reason and the nature of reality are closely interwoven, inseparable aspects of historical development. In terms of the *long run,* of the entire historical process, the content and the injunctions of reason are relative. They change with the changing forces of production, they transform themselves with the transformation of society, they enrich themselves with the expansion of our knowledge. William Blake grasped the essence of the matter with an artist's intuition: "Reason," he wrote nearly two hundred years ago, "or the ratio of all we have already known, is not the same that it shall be when we know more." This may be illustrated by an historical example referred to by Engels. Speaking of the origins of slavery, he remarked: "We are compelled to say—however contradictory and heretical it may sound—that the introduction of slavery under the conditions of that time was a great step forward. . . . It was an advance even for the slaves; the prisoners of war from whom the mass of the slaves was recruited, now at least kept their lives, instead of being killed as they had been before, or even roasted at a still earlier period." In other words, viewed against the background of cannibalism the institution of slavery was a *reasonable* arrangement, a step ahead in the evolution of reason.

Yet it is crucially important to realize that this relativity of the content of reason holds only in the longest run. In the *short run,* in any given historical period, what constitutes reason is *approximately* ascertainable. The determining factors are the level of social development, society's achieved fund of scientific insight, the accumulated wealth of practical human experience. To be sure, the qualification "approximately" can hardly be overstressed. For the intimate relation between reason and the continuously changing nature of reality makes it inevitable that what constitutes reason during any given historical period cannot be read off from a simple formula or encompassed by a neat definition.

This absence of a pat answer to the question as to what constitutes at any particular time the specific content of reason is invoked by contemporary bourgeois thought as an excuse for its own relativism and agnosticism. This excuse, however, is no more admissible than would be the contention that all efforts to cure disease ought to

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wait until medicine has reached its ultimate state of perfection. What the unavailability (and ineluctable impossibility) of *absolutely* valid statements about the meaning of reason actually points to is rather the perennial and all-important obligation of philosophical thought: the unremitting integration and re-integration, interpretation and re-interpretation of human knowledge and experience within a dynamic framework of reason. The fault of bourgeois thought today is *not* that it rejects the notion of eternal truth or denies the possibility of eternally valid definitions of reason. The fault, amounting to tragic failure, consists in "throwing out the baby with the bath," in using the inaccessibility of eternally applicable definitions of reason as an apology for abandoning the search for whatever meaning and content may be attributable to reason in any *concrete* historical situation. This leads not only to the complete abdication of philosophy in favor of opportunism and pragmatism, but also to obscurantism and the betrayal of reason itself.

What applies to reason applies also with some modifications but with no less force to our notions of reality. In the long run, the content of reality is also subject to perpetual change, partly because of continuous transformations in the real world itself, partly because of steady advances in our practical activity, in our empirical research, and in our theoretical understanding. Whether in the realm of social relations where historical development incessantly changes the structure of society or in regard to nature where scientific discoveries and human activity progressively modify what confronts us as "nature"—there is no eternal "reality." In the short run, on the other hand, in a concrete historical constellation, reality is subject to reseach and analysis; its structure can be comprehended with a degree of approximation sufficiently high to admit of purposeful and rational practice.

II

The confrontation of reality with reason is by no means merely an abstract, intellectual undertaking. In every society that is split into classes, i.e. based on the exploitation of man by man, the exploiting class is vitally interested in the preservation of the existing pattern of social relations; and in administering the affairs of society it will seek to admit of only such change as will not endanger this pattern. The point is therefore unavoidably reached when the progress of reason and the expansion of our knowledge of reality are impeded, when existing and maturing possibilities for society's

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further advancement, for further growth and development of all its members, are sacrificed in favor of the interest of the dominant class in the continuation of the established social order—when, in other words, the particular interests of the ruling class come into conflict with the interests of society as a whole. At such historical junctures the confrontation of reality with reason reveals the irrationality of the existing social order, turns—in the words of Marx—into "ruthless criticism of everything that exists, ruthless in the sense that the criticism will not shrink either from its own conclusions or from conflict with the powers that be," and becomes the intellectual expression of the practical, existential needs of the entire society, and in particular of its overwhelming majority, the oppressed and exploited classes. It is precisely then that the confrontation of reality with reason is proscribed by the ruling class, is persecuted as subversive by its police, is condemned as sacrilegious by its priests, and is decried as metaphysical and unscientific by its ideologists. And it is precisely at such historical junctures that the criticism of reality in the light of reason, the unmasking of so-called "common sense" and "practical intelligence"—those caricatures of reason which the dominant ideology substitutes for reason itself—becomes at once one of the most responsible activities of the time and one of the most powerful engines of humanism and progress.

It was Marx's unprecedented and unsurpassed accomplishment to discover this law of historical development and to lay bare the part played in its operation by fruitful intellectual endeavor: to define and continuously redefine the meaning of reason, to assess and continuously reassess the structure of reality—confronting systematically the one with the other, pointing out the shortcomings of the concrete, specific reality in terms of equally concrete, equally specific standards of reason. Remaining realistic, because it derives its frame of reference from the study and observation of the attained stage of historical development, and retaining the courage to be utopian because it sets its sights on the not yet realized but already visible potentialities of the future, such intellectual effort performs an overridingly important function: it serves as a guidepost to the next steps in mankind's forward movement.

Marx did not stop, however, at the formulation of this general theory. He applied it to the contemporaneously all-important case of capitalism. To accomplish this he had to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the nature and laws of motion of capitalist society, evolving

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concomitantly a concrete and historically relevant notion of a more rational social order. This called for detailed empirical research into the historical roots, the institutions and working principles of capitalism—in a word, for a comprehensive study of economics, the anatomy of the capitalist order. To this undertaking Marx devoted the better part of his working life, and the resulting contributions to knowledge were truly prodigious. Indeed, so great were those achievements, so vast the energy which went into their attainment as to give rise to the view that Marx's chief concern was the advancement of *economics,* the creation of a new *economic theory* which would be superior to its antecedents by providing better explanations or more accurate forecasts in the realm of economic affairs.

That this view was given wide circulation by bourgeois writers is by no means fortuitous. For looking upon Marx as a "positive scientist," as a scholar engaged in the description and analysis of the economic process, made it possible to pick and choose among his individual statements, to accept or to reject them depending on the extent to which they happened to suit the commentators' own predilections, to treat him as "an economist among economists," designating him indeed—in the words of one of the most eminent American theorists—as "a minor post-Ricardian." And Marxists in the West, seeking consciously or unconsciously to retain a common ground of debate with their academic opponents, in effect lent their support to this interpretation of Marx; while the Soviet attitude of insisting dogmatically on the truth of every word in Marx's writings—although stemming from entirely different causes—had, paradoxically enough, the same result.

Yet this conception of Marx is in violent contradiction perhaps not always with the letter but always with the spirit of his entire work. For large as were his *positive* contributions to our understanding of capitalism, his paramount preoccupation was the *critical* appraisal of the capitalist order in the light of reason, that is to say in terms of its ability (or inability) to satisfy human needs, to provide for the growth and development of man. This involved in addition to a thorough study of the mode of functioning of the capitalist system, a *critical* scrutiny of dominant thought on capitalism with the purpose of establishing the extent to which it elucidates or obscures the prevailing divergencies between reality and reason. It is not accidental that the first (unpublished) version of Marx's principal work was titled "An Outline of a Critique of Political Economy," that

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(*continued from page* 263)

his first major economic publication was called "A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy," and that finally *Capital* carries a sub-title "Critique of Political Economy." In fact, all of Marx's and Engels' voluminous writing—after the broad statement of principle in *The Communist Manifesto*—was essentially a vast *critical* effort, a many-sided confrontation of reality with reason, an indefatigable onslaught on all ideological activity which attempted, consciously or unconsciously, to hide and to minimize the difference between the existing and a more rational society.

The critical effort yielded far-reaching results. In the midst of the first great capitalist celebration, at a time when hosanna cries to the victorious bourgeoisie set the tone of "public opinion" and of political economy, Marx demonstrated the contradictory, conflict-laden nature of the capitalist system. He showed that although the transition from feudalism to capitalism represented a tremendous advance toward a more rational condition of mankind, further progress would be warped, hamstrung, and ultimately blocked by the irrationality of the capitalist order. He proved furthermore that this irrationality is not a transitory or fortuitous characteristic of capitalism but is inherent in it, represents the inevitable outgrowth of its very foundation: the institution of private property in the means of production. And he was able to give specific content to the notion of rationality in the present stage of historical development: a socialist planned society employing the socially owned means of production for the welfare of all of its members.

But what is most important, Marx went far beyond classical rationalism by recognizing clearly that it is the very essence of the irrationality of a social order to generate a social class which suffers from this irrationality, which bears the brunt of this social order's inadequacy, inhumanity, and injustice. In this class he saw the promise of progress, the social force which would do away with the irrational system and put in its place a better and more rational society. Marx identified this class as the proletariat, and he saw it exercising its historical power in the form of an expanding and maturing socialist movement. Not that he idealized the workers or believed in their heroism, unselfishness, or ardent dedication to human liberation. In his own words:

> If the socialist writers assign to the proletariat this world-historical function, it is not because they consider the proletarians to be *gods*. Rather the opposite. Because the destruction

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of all humanity, even of the *appearance* of humanity is empirically completed in the case of the fully developed proletariat; because all the existential conditions of the present society are concentrated in their entire inhuman extremity in the living conditions of the proletariat; because the human being has lost itself in the proletarian at the same time having not only won the theoretic awareness of this loss, but having been forced by inescapable, unvarnishable, imperative misery—that practical expression of *necessity*—to revolt against this entire inhumanity—this is why the proletariat can and must liberate itself. But it cannot liberate itself without abolishing its very condition of existence. And it cannot abolish its own condition of existence without abolishing all the inhuman conditions of the present society which find their concentrated expression in the situation of the proletariat.*

III

None of Marx's conclusions have been vitiated, let alone refuted, by subsequent events. History never stands still, and capitalism has obviously undergone a number of important changes. But the more it changes, the more it remains the same—as the French saying has it—and while the basic irrationality of the system has altered some of its forms, that irrationality is now more pronounced than ever before. Nor has this irrationality proved to be a disease curable by assorted medications prescribed from time to time by social reformers of all kinds; it is today, as it was in the days of Marx, an integral component, a characteristic feature of the capitalist order itself. And that socialism represents the only rational exit from the impasse into which capitalism has driven mankind, that socialist planning is history's next and necessary step, has been demonstrated not only by theoretical reasoning but by vast historical experience.

Yet, as was pointed out in the previous article, the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries has not developed in the way anticipated by Marx. Bad as its condition has been, it was able to rise above the "inescapable, unvarnishable, imperative misery" which was observed by Marx, and which he expected would be accentuated with the passage of time. Although its social and cultural existence is in essence as inhuman as it was in Marx's time, it has largely failed to "win the theoretical awareness of its loss" and has tended to succumb to bourgeois ideology and to adjust itself to its degradation. What Marx misjudged, in other words, is the intensity and speed

* Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Part I, Vol. 3 (Berlin, 1932) pp. 206 f. (Translated from the German by the writer; italics in the original.)

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with which the irrationality of capitalism would give rise to a movement powerful enough to carry out a socialist transformation of society. Yet serious as this miscalculation undoubtedly is, it should not even be mentioned in the same breath with the fallacy committed by those who consider the weakness or even absence of socialist movements in some countries to be a proof of the rationality, an argument for the desirability, or a sign of the progressiveness of the capitalist order. That position is no more defensible than would be the view that an inability of a human body to resist tuberculosis, however caused, furnishes a proof of the harmlessness or even usefulness of that illness. Both errors reflect essentially the wish being the father to the thought. The former, however, stems from insufficient appreciation of the obstacles barring the road to socialism, and—even if causing sometimes grave political errors—does no irreparable harm to the cause of reason. The latter, on the other hand, results inevitably in surrender to bourgeois ideology, in apologetics for the capitalist system, and in the abandonment of the struggle for a better society.

As long as capitalism lasts, as long as men live under an irrational social order, Marxism can neither be discarded nor refuted. For Marxism is nothing if not a powerful magnifying glass under which the irrationality of the capitalist system protrudes in all of its monstrous forms. Marxism will have outlived itself only when it has reached the end of its historical journey: when the confrontation of reality with reason has become redundant because reality will be governed by reason. Until then it remains the task of Marxian thought to carry on this confrontation under the concrete historical conditions of our time. What this specifically implies is the necessity to comprehend as fully as possible the structure and the mode of functioning of monopoly capitalism—the present variant of the capitalist system. It calls, moreover, for an effort to identify and to analyze that part of society (nationally and internationally) which bears the brunt of the irrationality of monopoly capitalism and which sooner or later will provide the energies for its abolition. As mentioned earlier, it was given only to Lenin to assimilate fully the essence of the Marxian method. In analyzing imperialism and in grasping the crucial role played in it by the awakening of the peoples inhabiting the colonial, dependent, and underdeveloped countries, he brilliantly applied this method to the reality of the twentieth century. The crisis of Marxism will be overcome by further work in that tradition.

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THE WORLD OF SCIENCE

by Philip Morrison

ON BEING WEIGHTLESS

This great globe itself, the stage on which until now all the acts of man's history have been played, is, you will agree, only a satellite. With a dozen other huge chunks, the planets, and a myriad of smaller ones, our earth is a satellite of that middle-class star, the sun. The moon, of course, is Earth's familiar satellite, and nowadays Earth has acquired a new cortege: a dozen assorted pieces of international hardware. All of these are likewise satellites of the sun and, whatever other motions they may have, orbit around it in gyrating curves of more or less complexity. Each of these members of the solar system feels the sun's gravitating pull, and responds to it. Thus sputniks travel each year once around the sun, moving in a great, slightly wavy near-circle, the undulations in which are the little excursions they make around the earth each hour or two.

The gravity of Newton is universal. That Kentish apple felt the pull of earth and sun as well. The earth as a whole, on the other hand, or more precisely its center of gravity, feels only the external effect, that of the sun. If we subtract the sun's pull from that of the earth, we have what we observe as the weight of any being or object on earth. On a smaller planet or one farther away from the sun, the weight of an object, say a brick, is less than on the more massive earth; on Jupiter, for example, it is much greater.

Within the earth's artificial satellites, every loose bolt or stray animal feels the gravitational pull of earth and sun, just as does the metal frame of the satellite itself. The frame is pulled to earth; so is the little dog. But they experience equal pulls, for the mass of the man-made satellite is so wholly negligible in the cosmic scale that its gravitational attraction for its own contents, or for any other body, is imperceptible. Satellite and cargo, therefore, feel almost exactly the same gravitational pulls. Moreover, in the vacuum of outer space neither feels any other non-gravitational pulls or pushes such, for example, as that of the air against the wings of an airplane. Under these conditions, the dog inside the satellite is called "weightless." Its weightlessness, be it noted, applies solely to its relationship with

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the satellite. In relation to the earth both dog and satellite have weight just as surely as they did on the ground at the time of launching: it is, indeed, only their weight which keeps them orbiting around the earth instead of shooting off at a straight line into space, as an intrinsically weightless object would do (we know of none). Weightlessness as the term is generally used, then, is the state of affairs in which the material frame of reference and the mobile object within it experience the same combination of gravitational and non-gravitational forces. If the frame of reference is no more massive than a mountain, weightlessness is all but complete. It will be the rule for passengers in satellites and space vehicles.

But less exotic vehicles than space ships can provide weightlessness too. In a freely falling elevator, for example, it is clear that both the passenger and the car to which he refers his motions feel the same pull of earth and little else. While the fall lasts, the passenger is "weightless." If the trip is short, he will feel his weight again only when the elevator reaches the bottom of the shaft. (Air resistance would in fact spoil the effect after a modest time of fall, for then the car would feel both the pull of gravity and the drag of the rushing air, while the passenger feels no air drag.) His experiences are easy to imagine. Should he release his pencil from his outstretched hand, it would not fall, but float in air; though obviously an observer on solid ground would report the pencil simply falling in a dead heat with the elevator and all its contents. If the passenger should pour himself a cooling drink, the liquid would remain a quivering ball above the glass. A candle lit by him would barely glow with a tiny globular flame, or might even refuse to burn for more than a few seconds, for the absence of weight would end the regular circulation of rising hot and falling cool air which keeps the flame going on terra firma. The books on his desk—if it were a well outfitted elevator—would slowly drift about once he chanced to breathe against them.

The scene is familiar to many. It was described by the pioneer Jules Verne and by a host of successors. In the last year or two, dogs and mice and men have been studied in real weightless free fall, within looping jet aircraft and rockets in the thin atmosphere at high altitudes. For the reader of *Life* magazine, a photo of man or animal in free fall is almost a commonplace. And Laika floated in orbit for a week or so, though too far off for photography. All of this attests to a concern, currently being given expression by a great deal of research money and effort, about the effects of protracted weightlessness on living beings, in the end on man. True, Laika lived well

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enough, but there is not in official circles any disposition to accept the weightless state as known.

It appears to me that this concern is much exaggerated. Even without Laika there is a clear line of argument which suggests that weightlessness, strange though it may be, cannot lead to serious physiological harm. For from our earlier description we can recognize a not unfamiliar environment, much more familiar than rocket or falling elevator, which approximates weightlessness. That is the swimming pool. Fully immersed in water, man approaches weightlessness, for his dense surroundings nearly compensate the gravitational pull of the earth. The pencil released does not fall, the books merely float around, the burden of gravity on limb and back is exquisitely ended. Of course the buoying force of the water will not exactly compensate the force of gravity for all objects, or even for all parts of the body. But for the human body the difference in density is only a few percent, and near-weightlessness is therefore the lot of the fully immersed swimmer. Indeed, in the heavy water of Great Salt Lake, so they say, one floats freely without any exertion at all. Breathing, to be sure, is impaired by the higher pressure at which air must be delivered, but at shallow depths the effect is small. Weightlessness must be very like a magically airy and resistanceless excursion in the Great Salt Lake!

There is, however, one important difference between this state and the weightlessness of the satellite or space ship. Aristotle formulated the tradition that we are endowed with five senses, and even today we speak of a mysterious "sixth sense." And yet surely there are other senses omitted from his list. One is the sense of temperature, of hot and cold, which is related to and yet distinct from the sense of touch which we think of as focused in the sensitive finger tip. Another is the sense of gravity, of up and down, which even the underwater swimmer possesses despite his relative state of weightlessness. Now it is just this sense of up and down which the space traveler must lack.

The reasons for this are rooted in the facts of human physiology. The sense of up and down is seated deep within the bony wall of the skull, in the labyrinthine cavity of the inner ear, where it lies intimately associated with other "navigational instruments" which tell us about the motion of the head. Two small membranous sacks, thumbnail size, in each side of the skull, do the job. They are called the saccule and the utricle, these names examples of that humanistic and classical tradition in medical science which so delighted Hans Castorp. Within the complex cavity of the inner ear are also shielded the

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resonators of the ear itself and other organs of equilibrium, the semicircular canals.

In each of these two little sacks there is a set of sensitive nerve cells, capable of firing electrical impulses up a deep-lying cranial nerve to enter the complex circuitry of the brain. To each of these nerve cells are attached long hairs which stretch across the whole diameter of the little sack, which is filled with a special jelly. At the end of the hairs there is a loose layer of hard, dense crystals of the mineral calcite, denser than bone. The little blankets of crystal, responding to the force of gravity, shift in the jelly as the head turns. Their motions bend the hairs which in turn stimulate the nerve cells, and we sense the direction in which gravity is pulling. The crystal-bearing hairs are in effect so many little plumb-bobs deep in the skull. The hair cells of the saccule are mounted to bend most freely in the vertical direction when the head is held in its normal erect position; those of the utricle yield most easily in the horizontal plane. Together they allow us to sense gravity without the aid of eye or muscle. Even immersed in water, a man can distinguish up from down, for the compensatory buoyant force of the water cannot affect the little sacks, shielded as they are within unyielding bone.

Some persons are born deaf, lacking the proper formation of the entire inner ear. Their deafness is the sign of failure of the resonators which perform the analysis of sounds. Usually in such cases the saccule and utricle are imperfect as well. Such a man can still learn to stand erect; the clues of eye and muscle burden are adequate for that. But immersed in a pool, eyes closed, he cannot distinguish up from down; the little sacks do not function. A normally-equipped man travelling in a space ship would be in just this predicament. Not only would he himself be weightless; so also would be the plumb-bobs within his skull. Like a watch held on the end of a chain, they would float freely, providing no clue to the direction of gravitational pull.

How would the space traveller be affected by this loss of the accustomed sense of up and down? We can guess by analogy with the case of a passenger in a rapidly descending elevator or a roller-coaster plunging from the heights to the depths of its course. The signals fired into the brain by the nerve cells of saccule and utricle would be the same in the two cases. Many of us, perhaps most, experience a certain queasy feeling in such situations; and if the rapid fall is prolonged or too often repeated we are likely to become nauseated—an extreme form of the related phenomenon of motion sickness. But just as sailors become immune to seasickness, so most

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people would probably soon adjust to the state of weightlessness: it is quite general that strong stimuli to the senses lead in a matter of minutes to fatigue and the diminution of the response. Thus one who spends a few minutes in a loud or odorous environment soon fails to notice what is unpleasantly plain to a newcomer. Nevertheless, it is possible that a few would fail to adjust without the aid of drugs; for them weightlessness would simulate a perpetual fall, a not unfamiliar form of nightmare.

It is this possibility which has apparently led to the well-publicized studies of weightlessness that the journals describe and the federal budget supports. Last May (1958) there was a meeting in Washington of some hundreds of biologists, research men working in a diversity of the sciences of life. The meeting was sponsored by the highest American organizations of research, and was plainly stimulated by the missile makers in all the services. Its aim was to propose and plan biological experiments in satellites. From yeast cells growing in a pressurized and warmed culture tube through plants and rats to men, the whole evolutionary gamut was surveyed.

Now it is no small trick to study the welfare of a yeast culture via the beep-beep of a radiotelemetering link. But it can be done, with much ingenuity and many dollars. It is a little harder to see why. A growing yeast cell is always immersed in water; it has no bony walls to shield the gravity sensor—which it surely doesn't possess anyway; it seems highly unlikely that a yeast culture can tell whether it is in orbit around the earth, or only the usual one around the sun, sitting on a laboratory bench in Madison, Wisconsin. A green plant is perhaps a more interesting subject for study. No one knows quite how a buried seedling distinguishes up from down. Yet it does "know" how to send its shoot upward. In orbit, weightless, which way will it grow? Probably the seed will find some other cue in its environment, now more important to it than the missing effect of weight. But what it does, while hard to study at a distance, will be of genuine interest to plant physiology.

As for men, we have already given the background. There was present at the May meeting an iconoclast or two who made the comment here implied: a few drugs and a man in a briny swimming pool are quite likely to reproduce every plausible effect of weightlessness. The only way a weightless man is likely to differ much from the swimmer is in the signals to his brain from those little sacks in the inner ear. They can probably be narcotized into silence.

Experiment in new domains is good in itself; surprises are after

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all more interesting than confirmation. And it must be borne in mind that the structure and function of the labyrinth of the inner ear is still by no means fully known. The simple, generation-old view we have given above, while certainly approximating the truth, is just as certainly not right in detail. Sensory physiology every year finds a more subtle interpretation of the structure it sees, mainly under the influence of the ever greater sophistication of function in man-made instruments. New insight and understanding may yet come from study of the weightless state.

Nevertheless, the problems posed are probably a good deal less fundamental than the journalists or the enthusiastic Air Force experts would apparently like to have us believe. Laika showed no effects of orbit travel, once the stresses of the firing were over, until her kennel in the vacuum failed, probably because of exhaustion of the batteries. Nor do I think the space travellers of the future will greatly object to their weightless state. Their worries will not be few, but the troubles of the inner ear, at least, will be nothing but minor annoyances, easily borne by anxious men intent on a hundred devices to guard themselves against true dangers: the vacuum of space, its radiations, and its rare projectiles.

Come now, you rich men, weep and shriek over your impending miseries!
You have been storing up treasure in the very last days;
Your wealth lies rotting, and your clothes are moth-eaten;
Your gold and silver lie rusted over, and their rust will be evidence against you, it will devour your flesh like fire.
See, the wages of which you have defrauded the workmen who mowed your fields cry out,
And the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts.
You have revelled on earth and plunged into dissipation;
You have fattened yourselves as for the Day of Slaughter;
You have condemned, you have murdered the righteous—unresisting.

—James 5: 1-6. *The New Testament, A New Translation,* by James Moffatt.

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THE HEAD FIXERS

BY FREDRIC WERTHAM, M.D.

In the old American labor movement there was an expression now forgotten: head fixers. The workers felt that they were confronted not only by employers but by professional and clerical persons who tried to keep them in their place. These were the head fixers. Nowadays a new group has been added to their ranks: the psychiatrists. Some theological head fixers used to tell workers that suffering is good for the soul. Now it is put more effectively by psychiatrists, as if it were scientific. The lower classes are just not supposed to have the capacity to suffer properly. As Hollingshead and Redlich put it, "[In Group V—the lower strata of workers] awareness of suffering is perceived less clearly than in the higher levels," or this same class "accept[s] physical suffering to a greater extent than do persons in higher status positions." (P. 176.) There is no shadow of evidence for this.

This book* is the record of an elaborate statistical study of mental patients by a sociologist and a psychiatrist. It is addressed to professionals and a lay audience with a view to shaping public policy (p. viii). Its plan is to study the relation of mental illness to social class. From the records of hospitals, clinics, and private psychiatrists in the New Haven area, data were compiled on 1891 patients, 1442 of them psychotic. Only 50 patients were examined in personal interviews. In addition, 40 psychiatrists were interviewed about themselves for one or one and a half hours. Five social strata are distinguished, from the highest Group I, to which 95 per cent of the psychiatrists living in the community are supposed to belong (p. 161); to the lowest stratum of workers, Group V, of whose behavior "practically all the psychotherapists interviewed disapproved" and by which "the psychiatrists as a group were irritated." (p. 344). The authors find that class or "social stratum" has indeed a bearing on what happens to mental

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* *Social Class and Mental Illness* by August B. Hollingshead and Fredrick C. Redlich. John Wiley & Sons. N.Y. 1958. 442 pp. $7.50.

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patients. It also emerges—although they do not express it so bluntly—that lower-class patients do not receive adequate scientific or humane treatment, if they receive any treatment at all. This is of course nothing new. It is an inescapable fact for anybody who glances below the surface of official handouts. No such elaborate research set-up was needed to prove this.

However, the authors deserve the greatest credit for bringing out that the well-to-do receive infinitely better psychiatric care than poorer people. That is something which cannot be said often enough. But just because this book is so true on this point it is the more necessary to examine how this information is weighed and elaborated.

In the socially minded, the title raises high expectations. The reader who hasn't his critical faculties with him will, however, be beguiled and gravely misled about fundamentals. He will be confused *into mistaking reaction for progress (a common ailment of our time)*. The book makes on the unwary an overwhelming impression of "scientificness." It is therefore a milestone in the long history of the use of psychiatry for maintaining the *status quo* and discouraging and disarming those who strive for juster social values.

The book gives the appearance of being very thorough, but it is only detailed and statistical. It denies what it seems to affirm, and blocks the road to any understanding (not to say remedying) of the role of social class in mental illness. A book like this is a powerful instrument of propaganda. It is financed by the federal government, carried out by a large research staff, two Yale University departments (Sociology and Psychiatry) are involved, a second volume is to appear, and no less than 25 papers have been published in different journals. So it is important to realize some of the fundamental typical defects in method and perspective.

The study is an example of the current misconception about the value of this type of statistical work for true scientific understanding. The questionnaire method on which a considerable part of the statistics is based is in itself a dubious instrument. It gives the deceptive appearance of an assembling of large amounts of reliable factual data. It is different from—almost the exact opposite of—scientific clinical history-taking in psychiatry. Many of the statistics are inconclusive, some appear to be contradictory. There is a confusing presentation of half-truths which prevents clear orientation. The larger the number of categories distinguished, the more scientific it sounds; but this is pseudo-scientific and sterile, like a great deal of modern sociology and economics. For example, from the section on the im-

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portant subject of the mass media very little insight is to be gained. The statistical sieve is so fine that it leads to nothing. Completely obscured is the clinically established fact that children from poorer families are more adversely affected by all the violence and crime than families who are better off and can afford a greater variety of entertainment, recreation, reading, and travel.

The concrete potentialities of the individual and the objective dynamics of the class are lost. The fact is ignored that qualitative changes take place, that at one point something is qualitatively different from what it was and cannot be investigated with mere statistics and questionnaires. No wonder the authors come to the "general conclusion" that whether "real" classes do exist in the behavior of families can only be confirmed or refuted by "further research." That of course is the great advantage of this type of statistical-questionnaire research, that you can endlessly get appropriations from large foundations and the government who don't like plain speaking or clear solutions in such a touchy field. The dispensers of bounty favor such studies because they want us to remain in doubt, reach no definite conclusions, have no point of view, and leave the door open for social illusions. That is part of the head-fixing process which has been so successful.

In line with this overevaluation of super-statistics (which would have made Freud squirm) goes an underevaluation of clinical research. In fact, in the enumeration of what knowledge a research scientist in this field should have (p. 370), clinical knowledge is completely omitted. And (p. 361) psychodynamics is wrongly defined as dealing only with "current unconscious conflict." There seems to be no need for good clinical work; all is statistics.

Of course in this society there are varied classes, subclasses, and groups. But the determination of class in this study is unnecessarily complex and confusing, as for instance in the elaborate subdivisions in the Occupational Scale. (P. 390.) The truth is that it is at the extreme poles of the class structure that the social dynamics become most manifest. What determines the essence of class, especially in relation to the problems of this study, is not address, income, position, or education, but the place a person occupies in the whole economic process with regard to the means of social production and distribution. The authors convey the idea that there may not be "real" classes in the United States, that they are only a working hypothesis for statistical correlations, and that the only differences between people's incomes, residences, positions, education, are quantitative in charac-

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ter. They see only gradual transitions, no real breaks, no real objective contradictions between classes. This is not the analysis of the American dream, it is the dream itself. So the authors make the fundamental error of saying, "Normally, a person who possesses highly trained skill has control over several other people." (P. 391.) Their example: an executive in Big Business! But in the existing social conditions no one with even the most highly developed skill—a nuclear physicist, for example—exerts thereby real social power or control. He may not even get the opportunity to exercise his skills.

There is a good deal of the kind of subjectivism which is currently so prevalent in official sociology and psychiatry. Group V families are said to have "convictions that they are being exploited," have "a feeling of exploitation." (Pp. 130-131.) The meaning to be attached to this can be determined only if the objective facts of their exploitation have been ascertained. The authors write: "Mental illness is defined socially." (P. 11.) (They base this on the fact that an individual may be treated for a certain kind of behavior in one society, while in another he may be punished or in a third exorcised.) This sounds progressive, but in reality it is a sort of vulgarized Marxism, subjectivistic and scientifically inaccurate. If I find in a brain at autopsy clear evidence of general paresis (*dementia paralytica*), that individual was mentally ill *regardless* of the social conditions he lived under. Biological and social factors are dialectically interwoven. You cannot decree their separation.

There is also considerable prejudice. The authors say (pp. 130-135) that the members of Group V have "deep-seated distrust of authority figures from childhood to old age"; they are "suspicious," "individualistic," "self-centered," "distrustful," "resentful," "hostile" ("their hostility breeds more hostility"); their "social relations are emotionally unsatisfactory"; they have "the tendency toward impulse gratification." The authors concede that there is a reality basis for at least some of these reactions. But they call them "character traits" just the same, and indicate that it is these traits that make them psychopathic. This kind of thing has of course often been said about workers, the unemployed, immigrants, Negroes, Jews, Puerto Ricans, *et al.*

We are even told that "Class V adults have a strong propensity to physical violence." (P. 364.) And yet in another place we find that parents of this same Group V "think there is too much violence [in children's TV programs] and that it has a bad effect upon chil-

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dren." (P. 128.) Evidently these parents have more understanding of violence in mass media than the psychiatrists and analysts who have provided specious arguments defending it (as an "outlet for pent-up aggressions" and similar clichés).

Why is it, then, that the lower economic strata receive worse psychiatric treatment than the upper strata, or no treatment at all? It is "not just a social injustice," the book tells us (p. 301), thereby revealing again its reactionary social direction. It is their own fault because they have "inflexible attitudes toward mental illness and psychiatry" (p. 340); there is "lack of sensitivity to psychopathological behavior in the lower segments of the status structures" (p. 173); they don't have enough "sublimation" (pp. 348, 364); lower class persons don't "verbalize" well enough (p. 348)—Gino, in *Dark Legend,* did all right! "The lower classes have a weaker ego" (p. 366); they suffer from "ego weakness" (p. 366); they are "less able to check their own impulses" (p. 360); lower-class children have a "defective super ego" (p. 363)—which means that they are not moral, have a defective conscience; they are "acting out against society" (p. 135); they get "unconsciously into juvenile delinquency and in a later phase into the gangland of the underworld." (P. 363.) They do not appreciate psychogenic factors (p. 175)—wrongly defined as pertaining only to "unconscious forces" (p. 361), currently a common error of far-reaching significance. In the very beginning of the book it is stated that different classes receive different psychiatric treatment because they react differently to mental illness (p. vii). The truth is just the opposite: they react differently because they receive different treatment. And we are asked to believe (p. 301) that "even if the lower-class patient were to be given the same opportunity" it would make no difference—because there has to be more research first!

Recommending that work in the psychiatric field which should and could be done right now be postponed to the distant future goes hand in hand with the authors' special perspective about the past. There is an inadequate historical appreciation of the basic role of clinical research into disease processes associated primarily with the name of Kraepelin. Without his methods and results such a study as that of the authors could not even have been started. He also wrote on social subjects, such as deracination, war, comparative psychiatry. This book is heavily slanted toward what one might call the cult of the personality of Freud. Yet it does not show real Freudian insight, neglecting Freud's historical role as a great clinician and as one who

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wrestled most of his life with the problem of understanding social phenomena on the basis of analysis of individual human behavior (Oedipus complex, War and Death, and so on). Instead, Redlich and Hollingshead focus on analytic overschematizations. For the historical part it might have been more instructive if they had given us the story of psychiatry at Yale, which shows the typical intermingling of progressive scientific development on the one hand and head-fixing and class interests on the other. At the beginning of the century Defendorf, lecturer at Yale, translated Kraepelin's textbook. The first professor of psychiatry, Eugen Kahn, wrote a much-discussed paper after the Bavarian revolution, concluding that revolutionary leaders are psychopaths! He was averse to psychoanalysis.

In academic circles, psychoanalysis both here and in Europe was originally considered rather subversive. However, it proved to be not only harmless but even useful in instilling conformity into questioning youths and quietism in restless intellectuals. So the pendulum in Yale swung all the way to the opposite extreme, super-psychoanalysis. This is the era represented by the book before us.

What this perspective entails can be seen with the precision of an experiment. A decade ago, the sociological author, August B. Hollingshead, published a book, the classical *Elmstown's Youth,* indispensable to anybody who deals with adolescents. In that book he spoke of "class consciousness"—a term that does not occur in the present book; he stressed the "fundamental" difference of the two extreme class poles; he emphasized the economic factor as opposed to secondary class characteristics; he wrote about the unorganized workers. He refused to take answers at their face value; he discussed youths humanly and with great understanding, without the use of one-sided psychoanalytic clichés.

What is the image of man according to the present orientation? What is this *homo psychoanalyticus?* "Basic to people in all classes" are oedipal conflicts, sibling rivalries, and psychosexual developmental patterns. (P. 238.) Add to this such features as the beginning of toilet training in infancy when "the child expresses unmistakable aggression." (P. 361.) There you are already close to class differences, for " 'anal' traits may be class-specific"! (P. 367.)

The fallacy of post-Freudian speculations has recently been pointed out by Viscount Samuel, the pioneer of Juvenile Courts in Great Britain: because the unconscious is found very correctly to be of great importance it does not follow that the conscious no longer counts. Einstein did not abolish Newton, but subsumed him. The

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authors (pp. 366-367) give all the weight to "unconscious motivations" as compared to "conscious goals," "unconscious expectation of the parent" as compared to "overt imitation" (so important a mechanism, if one wants to understand the pathogenic effect of current mass media on children), "early [infantile] experiences" over "direct impact of the social structure" (here the head fixing shows up again).

Although the problem which they set themselves requires it, the authors do not achieve a synthesis—far less an integration—of individual and social factors. For they do not seem to see, as Pavlov did, that the dialectic integration between the organism and the environment—and in the human organism this means primarily the social environment—is a continuous process. It goes on throughout life and affects the *whole* personality. Redlich and Hollingshead want to restrict this relationship, keep parts of man in splendid isolation, and limit the "sociocultural" influence to the ego and its study to "ego psychology." (P. 8.)

As regards psychotherapy, the authors make a rigid distinction between "classical analytic" and "directive," a division more theoretical than life-like. Just as psychotherapy since Morton Prince has become more and more psychoanalytic, so psychoanalysis, if truly effective, is becoming more and more psychotherapeutic. I have known patients to whom Freud during analysis gave very definitely "directive" advice about such matters as divorce and/or marriage. The techniques, including every form of psychoanalysis, have to be adjusted to the clinical problem of the patient. In this book the impression is conveyed that we have to train some kind of second-string psychotherapists to attend to second-class patients, and that we need "new approaches" and new research "to bring psychotherapy to lower-class patients." (P. 301.) The authors claim that no inexpensive, uncomplicated, and at the same time reasonably effective treatment exists in psychiatry today.

Are we really so badly off? The neo-psychoanalysts now so fashionable in liberal and progressive circles, like Fromm, Horney, Kardiner, Thompson, and Sullivan, do not show us the way forward because they do not take into full account the dynamic interaction between personal and impersonal (social) factors. They do not realize that there is a dialectic movement from pre-Freudian to Freudian psychiatry, and that our present task is the synthesis which views the inner life history of the individual in the *concrete* historical context (as in *The Circle of Guilt*). They do not recognize the head-fixing function of modern psychiatry, including their own. Professor Baran

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has well pointed out (MR, October 1958) that there is something "new" in the influence exerted at present by bourgeois ideology. The use of psychoanalysis and psychiatry to bring about people's social complacence is one of these new factors. (So are mass media. Cf. *Seduction of the Innocent.*)

We certainly would be in a pretty bad impasse if we were dependent on research like that in this book. But we are not. We *do* have good techniques of psychotherapy now. They are being used here and in other countries. There is no good reason why they should be "inevitably expensive and complex." (Pp. 300 and 349.) The problem is to apply what we know to alleviate human suffering and help people with that for which they need help. What they usually need is not "total reintegration of the personality" (p. 255) and hundreds of hours four or five times a week or, as the sales talk goes, they will not be completely cured. Paradoxically, such is the dialectic revenge of things, the well-to-do suffer from this setup, too, because they do not profit from the experience of those who have learned from many cases in low-cost clinics about the most effective treatment of emotional disturbances, sexual disorders, alcoholism, and other such afflictions.

There is no contradiction between scientific and social psychiatry. Psychiatry cannot be social if it is not truly scientific, and it certainly is not scientific if it is not social. The road to progress is the integration of Kraepelin, Freud, and Marx—which means to do justice to the dynamic dialectic interaction of conscious, unconscious, and social factors. Long before Freud, Marx demonstrated that human behavior is influenced by unconscious factors; namely, by a person's relative socio-economic position. In 1919, after the temporarily successful Central European revolutions, Freud advocated free clinics and a radical transformation of psychoanalytic technique, to help people "resist" social pressures. (Later, with the rise of reaction, he withdrew from that position.) Pavlov took the identical position when, on the basis of his experiments, he stressed the importance of the "power of resistance" of the strong central nervous system against the outer environment. If, like the authors of this book, we regard the personality within dehumanized schemes and the group within static classifications, we lose sight of the real nature of both. Only if we start from the uniqueness of the individual case history and the dynamic realities of the social scene can we gain a true perspective for practice and research.

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

Forewarned and Forearmed

United States business and government sources continue to announce items stressing the end of the recession and the beginnings of recovery. But many indicators do not point to recovery.

Steel production in the week ending September 20 was listed as 1,771,000 tons. This was 65.6 per cent of rated capacity and was slightly below the production of the previous week.

Domestic orders for machine tools totaled $23 million in August. This compares with $29.8 million in March, the high month for 1958. The August figure was almost exactly one half of that for August 1957.

Automobile production in the week ending September 20 was 41,407 units, compared with 52,365 in the like week of 1957. Auto production from January 1 to September 21, 1957, was 4,628,498. In the same period of 1958 the figure was 2,820, 959. Truck production for the same periods totaled 799,855 units for 1957 as against 584,856 for 1958.

Basic production lags in the economy are reflected in unemployment. Officially listed unemployed were close to 5 million at the end of September, while additional millions were working on short time.

From these figures it can be seen that though recession may have levelled off, recovery is not yet in sight. In such crucial areas as steel, machine tools, and automobiles, production is not increasing and is far below the corresponding figure for 1957.

This picture of United States economy in the autumn of 1958 parallels the situation in 1949-1950. Industrial production, which was 104 (1947-1949=100) in 1948, dropped to 97 in 1949. The present figures are 143 for 1957 and 137 for August 1958. The "limited" Korean war began in June 1950. In 1951, the industrial production index shot up to 120; in 1952 it went to 124, and in 1953 to 134. This parallel is very much to the fore in the thinking of United States business people, who repeatedly assert that another limited war, like that in Korea, might do for United States economy in 1958-1960 what the Korean war did in 1951-1953.

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Why This Perilous Passage?

Is war over Taiwan necessary? If we accept the Eisenhower-Dulles assumptions, there can be only one answer to that question: war, cold or hot, is needed now.

We begin with the President, and his basic economic thesis: "Our economy must continue to expand." The shortest cut to economic expansion under presently existing conditions is greatly enlarged spending for military purposes. The best justification for such spending is the threat of war or war itself. The 1950-1953 Korean experience, coupled with the alarming economic slump of 1957-1958, offer ample justification for this conclusion.

Secretary of State Dulles adds legal reasons to the weighty economic assumptions voiced by the President. The Secretary restated his premises on September 25 at a meeting of the Far East American Council of Commerce and Industry, held in New York's Hotel Waldorf Astoria. They are:

(1.) We have a treaty signed, sealed, and ratified, with the Republic of China (that is, with Chiang Kai-shek and his private army) that requires us to go to Chiang's defense.

(2.) If the government of People's China will let Chiang stay, unmolested, in Taiwan, where he can continue his blockade of Chinese ports, harry Chinese commerce, and develop his openly declared program to invade the China mainland, the United States will continue to supply him with arms, pay his bills, and will discuss a cease fire and a nonviolent solution of the Formosa problem.

We interrupt the Secretary's argument to make two comments: first, that a treaty (contract) to commit an illegal or immoral act is not binding; second, that Chiang, backed by Washington, has been using force and violence since 1927 in his repeated and unsuccessful attempts to stamp out Communism in China. After 31 years of this warfare, Chiang, financed and armed by Washington, is still on his anti-Communist rampage. In 1927, Chiang, as leader of the Kuomintang and potential master of China, faced a weak, scattered Chinese Communist movement. In 1958, the Chinese Communists have consolidated the power which they won in 1949, have stabilized the Chinese economy, organized a unified political structure, and are rapidly raising the living standard of the Chinese people, while Chiang is a defeated, discredited refugee from the Chinese mainland, financed and armed by the most powerful and most implacable enemy of the Peking government.

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We return now to the Dulles assumptions and justifications.

(3.) If Taiwan, a recognized part of China, now occupied by Chiang's half-million-man army and defended by the powerful United States Seventh Fleet and United States air forces, is attacked by the armed forces of People's China, Washington will fight a war with nuclear weapons against People's China, and presumably also against the Soviet Union, in order to fulfill its treaty obligations to Chiang.

Who is this Chiang, for whom the United States Oligarchy is prepared to wage a world nuclear war? The State Department answered that question in the thousand page White Paper, *United States Relations with China,* with special reference to the period 1944-1949 (Department of State Publication #3573, 1949). Chiang is the Syngman Rhee of China. He heads the "Four Family" coterie which was selected by the United States Oligarchy to hand over to United States Big Business the immensely valuable economic complex in North East China, built up as Japan's South Manchurian Development Project. United States oligarchs were ready to take over this valuable property when the Japanese surrendered in 1945, but the Soviet Union was already in military possession and the Chinese Liberation Armies were on the point of driving Chiang and his defeated and discredited Four Family clique from the mainland. For two decades (1927-1948) they had exploited and plundered the Chinese people, selling public property on the black market and pocketing the loot. They had joined forces first with the Japanese and then with the Americans to crush the Chinese liberation movement. Thus they had forfeited the confidence and lost the support of the Chinese people.

Issues in the Taiwan War

Backing for Chiang and his refugee government in Taiwan is the illegal legalistic excuse offered by Secretary Dulles to justify United States military occupation of Taiwan and its participation in the Chinese civil war, which is now centered around the control of Quemoy and Matsu. The reasons behind the intervention are of a very different character.

(1.) With a limited war in Taiwan occupying the attention of United States voters, the Republican Party might possibly win the November 1958 election. This would give Republican leaders another two years in office and enable them to hand out $150 to $160 billion in contracts, jobs, subsidies, and bonuses during 1959 and 1960. It would also enable them to continue their ill-considered and

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ill-starred adventures in leadership of their "free" world and containment and suppression of Communism.

(2.) With a hot war in progress, the Pentagon could spend another $50 billion in 1959 and perhaps $60 or $65 billion in 1960 and thus continue to dominate public life in North America and jeopardize the progress, peace, and happiness of mankind.

(3.) Under these conditions United States economy would continue to pursue its thriftless policy of spend-today-pay-tomorrow, pile up more debt, and jolt along on its rocky road through inflation to currency degradation, repudiation, and bankruptcy.

(4.) Taiwan might become a permanent dependency and possession of the United States. Big business could exploit its resources and its labor power. Its strategic location would strengthen the hold of the United States Oligarchy on the Far East. Taiwan, wrote General MacArthur in 1950, is an unsinkable aircraft carrier and is the key to the island chain extending from the Aleutians through the Japanese archipelago, Okinawa, and the Philippines, to Singapore. Who holds Taiwan and this island chain controls the eastern approaches to the mainland of Asia. At the moment Washington is in possession of the Aleutians, Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines. Only Taiwan remains to be democratized, pacified, and militarily occupied.

(5.) Washington might establish a "defense perimeter" along the shores of Asia, with a land base in South Korea. If it could do this, the Pacific would become an American lake and the United States would be mistress of the Pacific, as it already dominates the Atlantic.

(6.) If the Association of American States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will support such a program and back the war necessary to carry it into effect, the spread of Communism in Asia-Africa may be checked and even reversed.

(7.) If the American Century program of the United States Oligarchy is accepted and adopted by the United Nations (the General Assembly on September 23, 1958, voted 44 to 28, with 9 abstentions, against discussing the admission of People's China to membership during its 1958 session), can the United Nations survive the cold war and subsequent military conflict or will it perish as the League of Nations perished during the War of 1939-1945?

(8.) If the United States Oligarchy can win the coming all-out military struggle (World War III) it will be able to establish itself not only as master of the Pacific Ocean, but of the immense resources and the vast labor power of the Asian mainland.

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(9.) Can the remnants of the 19th century empires—Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Holland, Belgium, and Spain—presently financed, armed, and led by Washington, survive another general military conflict, or will the following time table be carried through:

War of 1914-1918—Revolution in Russia.

War of 1939-1945—Revolution in East Europe, Asia, and Africa.

War of 19?—Revolution in West Europe and North America.

History is an indefatigable and resourceful midwife who may yet find a defense against nuclear fallout and strontium 90 that will permit the human race to survive atomic war and establish a planned, coordinated, cooperative socialist world.

Whose Chicken Coop?

"On Formosa, U.S. builds a Gibraltar of the Pacific" screams a headline in *U.S. News & World Report.* (September 26, 1958.)

Subhead: "Formosa is converted by U.S. arms into a mighty military base. It bristles with new weapons and fighting power. It is beginning to look like the fortress of the Pacific."

Robert P. Martin of the *U.S. News* staff writes the chilling eyewitness account of this latest example of Washington's meddling in the domestic affairs of the neighbors, telling them how to think (anti-Communist), what to do (private enterprise), and policing them while they do it (Sixth Fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean, Seventh Fleet in Chinese waters, 275 military bases around the Northern Hemisphere, and Strategic Air Command over all).

Our footnote: The United States is five thousand miles from Taiwan, on the eastern shores of the Pacific Ocean.

Footnote Number Two: Taiwan is part of China.

Neither Brave Nor Free

We have been searching for a symbol that would describe the state of mind of United States youth. We believe that we found it a few days ago on a trip to the Middle West where a friend told us the following story.

He has two nephews, one a senior in high school, the other a senior in college. Like us, he was baffled by the attitude of young people. He invited both nephews to lunch. After some preliminaries he presented each of them with a copy of a short statement on United States foreign policy recently made by Mr. Cyrus Eaton and asked both of them what they thought about the statement.

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The high school senior hesitated, then, without a word, got up and left the table.

The college senior, pressed for a comment, shook his head. "I don't wish to express an opinion," he said.

"But surely you have some thoughts on this vital matter," our friend persisted.

"The Far East is a controversial subject at the moment," replied the college senior. "I prefer not to discuss it."

We think this episode sums up the state of the nation as far as school and college youth are concerned. The general run of them follow the easy path, avoid controversial issues, and sidestep expressions of opinion that might jeopardize their degrees or their future careers. They are opportunists and conformists. They are neither brave nor free. There are exceptions, of course; but so far as our observation goes, opportunism, conformity, and servility are the overall pattern.

Economic Note from China

China Reconstructs (Wai Wen Building, Peking 37, China) reports in its August, 1958, first page editorial:

> What the builders of the giant Paotow steel works did recently was an effective lesson to the "slow boat" advocates. By bold thinking, confirmed by calculation, they found that they could put it up in half the time first estimated, for half the investment, and with twice the productive capacity. Moreover, with the new emphasis on industry in every corner of the country, 10,000 small blast-furnaces will be built next year alone in the small towns and countryside, and they alone will yield 20 million tons of pig-iron, 2½ times the total national production today—while small Bessemer converters will make steel as universally.

An interesting example of central planning supplemented by local initiative.

HAVE *YOU* JOINED
THE ASSOCIATES YET?

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(*continued from inside front cover*)

We have been very fortunate to secure the agreement of the following to act as judges of the MR Essay Contest (entries for which had to be postmarked not later than September 15th): J. Raymond Walsh, Chairman of the Associates; Carey McWilliams, editor of *The Nation;* and Stanley Moore, formerly professor of philosophy at Reed College. The judges are now hard at work sifting and pondering the forty-odd essays that were submitted, and we hope to be able to announce their decisions in our next issue.

Book buyers among MR readers will find two special sets of bargains announced in this issue. First, there is MR Press's first sale of books (see pages 264-265). We think you will agree that this sale offers some very remarkable values. And, secondly, there is the list of bargains being offered by Wellington's (see the back cover). Please be sure to order MRP books from us, and Wellington books from Wellington's.

MR Press's paperback edition of Leo Huberman's *Man's Worldly Goods* is entirely sold out. We have been lucky enough to be able to buy from Harper's (the original publisher) their entire remaining stock of the cloth-bound edition and have about 140 copies still on hand. The price is $3 per copy, and orders will be filled in order of receipt until the stock is exhausted.

Another MR Press book which is out of print is I. F. Stone's *The Hidden History of the Korean War* for which we still receive orders—perhaps partly because of its profound relevance to the continuing crisis of United States foreign policy in the Far East. We would like to fill as many of these orders as possible—especially those which come from libraries—and with this in mind we suggest that any readers who have copies they no longer want should send them to us in exchange for any one of the following books: Zilliacus, *A New Birth of Freedom?;* Forman and Sachs, *The South African Treason Trial;* Ginger, *The Bending Cross;* Smedley, *The Great Road;* Goldberg, *American Radicals;* Sweezy, *The Present As History.* We will also be very happy to swap any one of these books for single copies of the September 1950 issue of MR (Vol. 2, No. 5), our stock of which is entirely exhausted.

We are badly in need of voluntary help for such tasks as addressing mail, stuffing envelopes, wrapping packages, etc. The work itself is not exactly fascinating, but the company is excellent and the feeling of having done one's bit for the cause of socialism is balm to the conscience. Anyone who can put in one or more afternoons a week please phone (Oregon 5-6939) and let us know.

Under new postal regulations, a charge of 5 cents is levied against the sender of every undeliverable piece of second-class mail. So please, if you move, send us your new address well in advance to help us keep these charges down to the lowest possible minimum.

By far our favorite letter this month comes from an old friend who lives right here in New York. "I am sure I do not speak for the Association of Insurance Underwriters," she writes, "when I express the hope that *The Wall Between* will have the wide audience it deserves. So absorbed was I in Mrs. Braden's book that burglars walked off with a 60-pound tape recorder as well as a large bag of assorted goodies while I curled up on the couch with the best book I've read in a long, long time!"

Reminder: when you start thinking of Xmas presents, remember that a gift sub to MR is only $3.

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